

of Negro clerks on the floor. You would start with one, two or three, as they qualified.

- Q. We employ Negroes in large numbers as elevator operators, maids, stock handlers, etc. If we were to employ by merit and not by race we will have to stop hiring Negroes exclusively for jobs in which they now work. Perhaps in the end fewer Negroes would be employed that way than are now employed.
- A. Certainly we do not suggest that you employ Negroes where they are not now employed and continue racial hiring for the jobs for the jobs where they now work. Certainly all people should be eligible for employment in any capacity. We are not worried about the Negroes' capacity to compete. Very probably larger numbers of Negroes would still qualify for certain types of jobs and fewer for others because of lack of training and experience. The point is that policy of employing merit is much sounder.
- Q. Why do you take it upon yourself to come to us about this. We own this business, operating it is our responsibility. What right do you have to concern yourself with any phase of our operations? Don't you think we might make progress faster if we went ahead on our own without interference from the outside?
- A. We disagree that progress would be made faster if there was no outside concern. The history of Negro-white relations in this country indicates that old patterns are never broken until someone does something about it. Practically every advance which Negroes have made in employment has resulted from somebody's efforts. That is the way all social progress is made. That is why social institutions have organized and have continued in existence through the years. That has been the role of the church, of the civic agency, of practically every organization that exists for the public good. We are not attempting to force you to do something against your will. We are trying to sell you an idea. We are no more guilty of imposition than is the salesman who comes to sell you equipment which he thinks will be of value to you in your operation.
- Q. Don't you think that the people who are trying to legislate fair employment practices are doing more harm than good? Doesn't that sort of action cause employers to get stubborn and postpone progressive advance?
- A. Actual experience demonstrates the opposite. It can be pointed out that as employers saw the campaign for fair employment legislation get stronger in New York State many of them decided to beat the gun by adopting a progressive policy ahead of time. Large numbers of employers decided not to buck the law in New York once it was passed and immediately changed their policy before someone could get around to registering a complaint. There is every evidence that intergroup goodwill has been greatly advanced in New York as a result of the campaign and passage of the anti-discrimination law. The campaign for fair employment legislation in Michigan has done more to educate the public to a realization of the ill effects of discrimination in employment than any other action.